

Joint Budget Committee

September 24, 2004

Attendance: Kit Boesch, Human Services; Kerry Eagan, County Board; Corrie Kielty, Mayor's Office; Robin Mahoney, United Way; Ray Stevens, County Board; Bob Workman, County Board; Annette McRoy, City Council; and Marc Wullschleger. Special guests: Tiffany Mullison and Pat Meyer from Fresh Start Home.

Ray Stevens called the meeting to order. He introduced Tiffany Mullison, Director of Fresh Start Home, and Pat Meyer, Board Treasurer, for Fresh Start Home. Tiffany stated she wanted to come to this meeting to update the committee on the activities of the past two years. Tiffany passed out their brochure and informational sheet. Tiffany stated "flourishing and nourishing" is their standard for the women, team, and Board of Directors at Fresh Start Home. Through a shared belief in the organization's mission, the retention of a passionate team, and Board investment, Fresh Start Home has conjured a recipe for sustainability.

Tiffany stated Fresh Start Home's inception was a result of discussion and labor among visionaries in the Lincoln community. Since the doors opened in 1992, 802 women have called Fresh Start their home. The agency's history of providing services to single women, unaccompanied by children, fills a unique niche. According to HUD Supportive Housing Grant Exhibit 1, Lincoln has 226 beds available for single adults in a transitional housing program. The unmet need is estimated at 275 transition beds.

Five key areas, as reflected in the 2004 Strategic Plan, illustrate their recipe for sustainability. *The need for services is the impetus for their work.* The five key areas are:

1. Women's Programming – Fresh Start Home is one of the final stages in the movement from homelessness to permanent housing in Lincoln's Continuum of Care. They provide transitional housing and supportive services for women invested in attaining self sufficiency as each woman crafts an *Individual Goal Plan* to prevent future homelessness.
2. Staff – The presence of a consistent, caring, and competent team is vital to provide the level of services needed for women. Since the 100% turnover in 2002, six team members will celebrate their two year anniversary in December 2004. Two overnight team members have celebrated their one year and six month anniversaries. Enticements to retain this team include: the reinstatement of health care benefits, addition of dental and vision coverage, celebration of personal and professional achievements, and provision that each team member craft her own position title and duties based on her strengths. Through the acquisition of overnight staffing, they now feel complete and are proud to offer services 24/7. Trainings serve to increase knowledge and skills as well as deepen rapport and moral between team members. An entirely new Personnel Policy was developed, and will be reviewed annually. A Team Member manual was created, and also will be reviewed annually.

3. Community Relations – Relations with funders, service clubs, individuals and corporations are of magnanimous importance to the continuation of Fresh Start Home. Due to the generosity of volunteers, every room in the home has been painted, newer carpet installed in most areas, and women receive necessity and luxury items.

Collaborations with collateral agencies have benefited the women. The team and Board have worked diligently to restore the agency's reputation and increase awareness of the agency. A new logo, new brochures, and an updated website are successes.

4. Finance and Fundraising – In August, 2002, the checking account had a balance of \$12 and a \$20,000 line of credit was fully drawn. Thanks to leadership from the Board—and emergency funding from the Lincoln Community Foundation, Woods Charitable Fund, and Keno monies—the doors remained open for the women. The agency has been successful in attracting new funders, re-engaging former funders, and maintaining positive relationship with current funders. In 2005, it is estimated 11% of the revenue (\$24,500) will be generated from contributions and fundraising endeavors.
5. Facility – Fresh Start Home provides decent, safe, and sanitary transitional housing for women. Mediocrity is not their standard. As such, enhancements to the home have focused on creating a healing and inviting environment. An enchanted garden, private meeting room, and the display of female friendly art work have increased the aesthetic presentation of the home. The agency continues to utilize the duplex next door as a rental property. The Board is exploring the acquisition of a larger facility, which may result in an increase in the number of women able to be housed, the addition of much needed storage space, and allow for planned growth of the agency.

Pat Meyer stated he has been on Fresh Start Home Board for five years. He stated it has been an eye opening experience as a Board member—the things that were not being done correctly—noting the overnight process and medications.

Kit applauded the Fresh Start Home Board for stepping up and kudos to Tiffany and their Board for their great job and commitment over the past two years.

Tiffany also answered questions from the committee:

- There are fewer women being served because of no more beds—only 16 beds available; and the women are staying longer.
- They provide housing vouchers and there is a follow up goal plan for up to one year.
- The Fairy Godmother program has been a positive.
- There are no duplicate services now. They are utilizing wraparound services in the community.

Ray thanked Tiffany and Pat for coming this morning and sharing Fresh Start Home's information.

Kit gave her Human Services Report for August and September. She highlighted the following:

1. Keno Human Services Prevention funding brought up a policy issue that will be discussed later in the meeting.
2. Low income transportation program—after one week of selling passes the sites had sold 182 (67 men, 93 women, and 22 youth). Kit distributed the flyer showing the nine sites that are selling passes. She stated that the nine locations bought the passes from StarTran. It was also noted that Matt Talbot Kitchen and Outreach is a different situation than the nine sites. Kit informed the committee that Volunteer Partners has been contracted to supervise and monitor this program.

Kit stated that she sent a memo to Mayor Seng and StarTran regarding bus passes by semester for students to get to school. She said Lincoln Public Schools agreed to sell the passes in middle and high schools. Kit stated that if our philosophy is to value education in this community that we need to get students to school. Kit noted that if 10% of the student population purchased passes that would mean \$40,000 - \$50,000 for StarTran. Discussion will continue.

3. Kit stated she just received notice from JAIBG (Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant) that the Graduated Sanctions Program dollars will be drastically cut next year—from \$188,887 to \$47,000 next year. She wanted the committee to have a head's up regarding this cut. It was noted that we have been lobbying with senators to keep this money. The funds cover many of our graduated sanctions programs. Kit also thanked the County Board for their support in regards to JAIBG.
4. Mayor's Group Home Task Force is looking at recommendations to (1) improve city codes as well as (2) Health and Human Services System oversight and quality improvement. Kit stated Chief of Police, Tom Casady, has been in touch with Nancy Montanuz, Director of Services, Health and Human Services System, regarding the police calls to the group homes. The second draft of Task Force Recommendation (September 14, 2004) was distributed to members.
5. Kit mentioned that DayWatch clients are still hanging out around the library downtown and a few other locations. Kit stated she had met with the People's City Mission and they are going to recruit three homeless men to do street outreach in October. Kit stated she has put together "gift box" of care items for these men as their reward. Kit said the People's City Mission Day Shelter is still averaging 35 men and that the Mission is looking to expand the Day Shelter with the onset of winter.

The Keno Policy (see attachment 1A)—there is no written policy regarding distribution of funds. It was the Planned Parenthood proposal that brought this policy into light even though Planned Parenthood withdrew their proposal due to other funding sources. A policy needs to be decided upon. Discussion followed. It was decided that this needs to be discussed at The Common on Monday, October 4th at 8:30 a.m. It was agreed upon that there needs to be a structure and that The Common should be able to come up with that policy since it is both County and City funds

that are distributed for the Keno Human Services Prevention Fund. The goal will be to have a written policy. Kit agreed to have an outline of information for The Common meeting.

The Malone Center is in arrears in submitting tax information. Robin distributed from Cindy Love, CPA, and Chair of United Way's Audit Resource Team. Cindy's recommendation: She urged the Center management and Board to become familiar with all tax filing requirements or to hire a consulting professional to insure that filings are timely. She was concerned that there appeared to be no urgency or responsibility taken by management in getting either the 2001 or 2002 returns filed until funding was suspended by United Way.

Kit noted in Tami's defense she was overwhelmed as being hired as director with all the Malone Center problems and was just an oversight on her part—tax returns and audits weren't a priority at that time. Discussion followed. Robin stated United Way will be holding funds until the 2002 tax return has been filed correctly.

Family Service—with United Way taking the lead—John Brasch has been appointed director to get things straightened out. He has already made changes in personnel and policies. Debts are being taken care of and there seems to be good cash flow through September. It was noted the majority of their income comes in September for Before and After School Programs. The month of December will probably be the next cash flow problem. Kit stated she has requested that Family Service send quarterly reports for each of the programs that the County funds. She wants to know that the programs are doing what they are supposed to be doing. It was noted that this crisis got the attention of the Board and the Board is trying to catch up—a multi million dollar agency in crisis.

Bob inquired of Kit if she knew what agency is awarding gift certificates (\$20 WalMart, \$20 Sam's Club) regarding nutrition education. Kit stated she did not but Annette stated that Matt Talbot Kitchen and Outreach rewards participants (\$20 gift certificate) for graduating their health/nutrition class. This reward is to help set up their household.

Kit's Attachment 2 was discussed - \$20,000 JBC Allocation for Employment Services. Kit brought to the committee to provide some guidance. Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) goes to refugees. Non-TAG eligible clients refers to immigrants and refugees who have been here over five years and receive no financial assistance.

The TAG Committee also made the following recommendation for the JBC to consider when allocating \$20,000 for employment assistant to low income:

\$10,000 to Lincoln Action Program to specifically work with non TAG eligible clients in job training, placement, and retention services.

\$10,000 to Lincoln Literary Council to provide ESL training to non TAG eligible clients in ESL classes.

NOTE: *Non TAG eligible clients refers to immigrants and refugees who have been here over five years.* It was decided to table this until Terry Werner was present to lead the discussion on this information.

Next meeting: Friday, November 5, 2004
8:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Human Services Office, 555 South 9th Street

Meeting was adjourned by Ray.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia D. Gergen